

# Northampton Supplementary Regulations

December 20, 1984	Membership	Part time employees who work a minimum of 20 hours per week shall become members of the system after having been employed for 6 months at the above mentioned minimum number of hours. Creditable service will be given on the basis of time for time, based on the normal workweek of the department. (Revised by supplementary rule approved September 3, 1991).
December 20, 1984	Creditable Service	Time for time is granted based on the normal workweek of the department. In the case of part-time school employees, however, the number of hours worked is divided by 1400 to arrive at 1 year of creditable service.
December 20, 1984	Public Records	Financial records, actual account amounts and medical records of members and former members are <u>not</u> public records.
December 20, 1984	Regular Compensation	<p>Retirement deductions are to be taken only on the funds paid to [members on National Guard duty] on the funds paid to them by the federal government. (National Guardsmen receive from the City for their summer tours, the difference between pay from the city and what the federal government allows. They do not lose any time in creditable service for the weeks they must spend with the Guard).</p> <p>It is the policy of the system that any members who have <u>another</u> salaried position within the city must have deductions withheld from both salaries for retirement purposes. This does not apply to persons employed intermittently by the recreation department or persons paid as election workers. It applies to employees such as the Planning Department secretary who is also secretary to the Planning Board and is paid an additional bi-yearly sum for attending monthly evening meetings and taking minutes.</p>
August 27, 1990	Creditable Service	Part time employees, however, who have worked consistently on a part time basis for all of their years of employment with the City shall have, upon becoming eligible and applying for retirement benefits from the City, full-time creditable service granted at such retirement time. Employees who have worked both full and part time during their years of employment shall have their part time service prorated and added to their full time service. Regular compensation for purposes of calculating the retirement allowance, shall be the average of their last three or highest three years of earnings, whichever is greater, of three consecutive 52 week years.

# Northampton Supplementary Regulations

August 27, 1990

Buy-Backs

Any member in service who, upon approval of the retirement board, wishes to pay into the system a make up payment of regular deductions, together with regular interest, to purchase creditable service for previous employment in the retirement system or any other system within the Commonwealth governed by the provisions of chapter 32 of the General Laws in which he/she had been a member, shall pay such make-up at the rate of at least ten dollars per week for every fifteen hundred dollars of the total accumulated deductions owed. Increments shall be at the minimum rate of ten dollars per week, or as determined by the retirement board, in order that the total repayment time shall be completed no later than December 31 of the third year from the onset of such make up payments.

November 13, 1990

Membership

New employees who have the words “Temporary and/or Intermittent” included in their job descriptions shall not become members of the system due to the nature of these positions. Upon receiving a permanent appointment or a change in job description, the employee shall become a member, provided that he/she meets the requirements for membership outlined in previously approved rules, e.g., part time employees. Temporary full time employees who become permanent full time employees shall have the option of buying back their time to initial date of hire, provided there has been no break in service. This rule applies to former CETA employees whose positions have been made permanent, are now city employees, and wish to buy back their creditable service to original date of hire.

September 3, 1991

Membership

Part time employees who work a minimum of 20 hours per week shall become members of the system. Creditable service will be granted on the basis of time for time based on the workweek of the department.

July 11, 2005

Policy Manual  
Membership

This policy supersedes and replaces all previous membership policies of this board.

All permanent employees of the city working a minimum of 20 hours per week shall become members of the Northampton Retirement System.

All on-call fire and police employees shall become members of the Retirement System, with creditable service to be determined at the time the employees become permanent employees.

Those employees who are temporary or intermittent and later become permanent shall

# Northampton Supplementary Regulations

join the Retirement System, and will have the option of buying back their previous temporary service.

Members of the System who drop below the minimum requirements for membership will remain members of the System and will continue to make contributions.

All members who work at least 20 hours per week will be considered full-time for purposes of calculating creditable service.

Those members who are working less than 20 hours per week, and those members buying back previous service of less than 20 hours per week, will have service calculated as a percentage of the 20-hour full-time rate, e.g. 10 hours will be considered halftime, and 5 hours will be considered one-fourth time.

School employees who work the entire school year and return the following September will be granted a full-year of creditable service. Employees who leave at the end of the school year will: be granted credit through their date of resignation.

July 11, 2005

Policy Manual Creditable  
Service

This policy supersedes and replaces all previous creditable service policies of this board.

Active members may buyback service previous to membership and may buyback previous service that was refunded to them.

No liability will be accepted for employees of other Systems who were never active members of the Northampton Retirement System.

Prior service that was at least 20 hours per week will be considered full-time. Service less than 20 hours will be prorated as a percentage of the 20-hour minimum.

Military buybacks are calculated at an annualized 35-hour salary based on the rate listed on the membership form, and as verified by the deductions received. When no salary information is given, salary will be estimated using the first full 12 months of deductions.

Where information is sufficient to prove that the employee was employed by Northampton, every effort will be made to make an accurate estimate of the creditable

# Northampton Supplementary Regulations

service and of the salaries earned. The Retirement Board is the final arbiter of service granted in cases where full employment records are not available.

All buybacks must be completed prior to retirement and no creditable service will be granted until the buyback is complete.

Once a buyback is begun, it must be completed within 3 years. For buybacks greater than \$4,000, members can take up to 4 years to complete it. Payback schedules longer than 4 years require board approval.

July 11, 2005

Policy Manual  
Elections

This policy supersedes and replaces all previous election policies of this board.

Elections will be held as a one-day walk-in event, with the retirement office as the polling station. The office will be open 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on that day.

Candidates will be listed on the ballot in the order determined by a random drawing, conducted by the election officer.

Candidates will not be given a mailing list of members. Candidates may provide material in postage-paid envelopes for mailing to retirees and/or active members.

Retirees will be provided with mail-in ballots. Active members can request an absentee ballot.

Mailed-in ballots must contain a name and return address on the outside. Ballots with no return address will not be counted. Ballots can be enclosed in a sealed inner envelope if the voter wishes to do so. Ballots will be checked off the eligible voter list as they are received, separated from the outer envelope, and set aside for counting.

Walk-in voters must show identification, and will be checked off the eligible voter list.

Once the polls are closed, the election officer and that officer's designees will count the ballots and post the election returns. The results will be posted in all departments, and will be included in the next retirement check mailing.

# Northampton Supplementary Regulations

July 11, 2005

Policy Manual  
Miscellaneous

## Retirement Payroll

Retirement checks are mailed on the next-to-last business day of the month and are dated the last business day of the month.

Retirement checks which are lost in the mail will be replaced after 5 days, provided the retiree agrees to return the original check if received. If the retiree should later cash the original check, the overpayment will be deducted from his/her next retirement check, and all future requests for replacement checks will require stop payment of the original check and a waiting period for the treasurer to assure the check has not been cashed before a replacement check can be issued, and the retiree will be charged a stop-payment fee equal to the rate charged by the Board's bank.

## New Retirements

New retirees will be paid beginning the work-day following their last paid day of employment or on their requested date of retirement, whichever comes last. Partial months of retirement will be prorated based on a 30-day month (e.g. if a person retires on the 15th of the month and is paid for the 15th, their retirement pay will start on the 16th and will be equal to one-half month's pay).

## Accounts Payable

When the board meeting schedule leads to late-payment fees or other problems, bills may be paid prior to the warrant and marked as pre-released on the warrant. Currently, this policy would apply only to the bottled water bill, the newspaper subscription, and to hotel reservations.

## Payroll Certification

Retirees and survivors are not required to have their signatures notarized. Those signing the payroll certification form under power of attorney will be required to have the form notarized.

1. In the section entitled "MEMBERSHIP" the provision reading "All permanent school employees not eligible for membership in the Teachers Retirement

# Northampton Supplementary Regulations

System shall become members of the Northampton Retirement System” is not approved in the form submitted because it is not clear whether school employees who are not eligible to join the Teachers Retirement System because they are not teachers will be required to work a minimum of 20 hours per week to be eligible for membership.

2. In the section entitled “MEMBERSHIP” the provision reading “Elected officials may join the System and have 90 days from the date of assuming office to elect to do so. Elected officials who opt not to join the System waive the right to buy back that service at a later date” is not approved because it is inconsistent with the provisions of G.L. c. 32, § 4(a) which allows persons who become members of a retirement system to purchase creditable service for time as an employee.
3. In the section entitled “MISCELLANEOUS” the provision reading “When the monthly board meeting falls in the final week of the month, the retiree direct deposit file can be released before the payroll warrant is signed. When necessary, the monthly checks: can be mailed before the warrant is signed. Staff payroll warrants are also payable before the staff warrant is signed” is not approved because it is inconsistent with the provisions of G.L. c. 32, § 23(2). This section provides that the city or town treasurer shall have the custody of the funds of the retirement system. Payments from the system’s funds shall be made by him only upon vouchers signed by two persons designated by the board. An attested copy of the vote designating these persons with their signatures shall be filed with the treasurer-custodian as his authority for making payments upon vouchers so signed. No voucher shall be drawn unless it shall have been previously authorized by vote of the board.